

Application No.: 10/028,172

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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

Claims 1 to 30 (canceled)

Claim 31 (currently amended): A diagnostic reagent for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection comprising a solid phase sensitized with

(a) ~~a mixture of a~~ genetic recombinant HCV antigen having a molecular weight of 10,000 or more and

~~(b) conjugated synthesized HCV antigens comprising which comprise~~

(ii) a second HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein;

wherein each of the first HCV antigen and the second HCV antigen has a molecular weight of less than 10,000.

32. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen comprises ~~[[is]]~~ an HCV non-structural region protein ~~proteins~~.

33. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen comprises ~~[[is]]~~ NS3 antigen.

34. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the first and second synthesized HCV antigen is ~~antigens are~~ independently selected from the group consisting of HCV non-structural region proteins and HCV structural region proteins.

35. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase is directly sensitized with the genetic recombinant HCV antigen.

36. (currently amended): A diagnostic reagent for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection comprising a solid phase sensitized with (a) ~~a mixture of a~~ genetic recombinant HCV antigen having

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a molecular weight of 10,000 or more and (b) one or more synthesized conjugated HCV antigens, wherein the synthesized conjugated HCV antigen [[is]] comprises a HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein and has a molecular weight of less than 10,000.

37. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the synthesized HCV antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen is selected from the group consisting of core peptide antigen, NS4 peptide antigen and NS5 peptide antigen.

38. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the synthesized HCV antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen is selected from the group consisting of HCV non-structural region proteins and HCV structural region proteins.

39. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the synthesized HCV antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen comprises core peptide antigen, NS4 peptide antigen and NS5 peptide antigen.

40. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the carrier protein and the synthesized HCV antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen are present at a ratio of about 1:3 to 1:20 (carrier protein: synthesized HCV antigen).

41. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the carrier protein comprises [[is]] a water-soluble protein.

42. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 41, wherein the water-soluble protein is selected from the group consisting of BSA, ovalbumin and hemocyanin.

43. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen is conjugated with a carrier protein.

Claims 44 to 50 (canceled)

51. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase comprises [[is]] carrier particles.

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Claims 52 to 54 (canceled)

55. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 51, wherein the carrier particle is selected from the group consisting of polystyrene latex particle, copolymer latex particle, erythrocyte and gelatin particle.

56. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the solid phase comprises [[is]] carrier particles.

57. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 56, wherein the carrier particles are selected from the group consisting of polystyrene latex particle, copolymer latex particle, erythrocyte and gelatin particle.

58. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the first or second HCV antigen comprises a synthetic peptide.

59. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 58, wherein the synthetic peptide has a molecular weight of 1,000 to 5,000.

60. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the HCV antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen comprises a synthetic peptide.

61. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 60, wherein the synthetic peptide has a molecular weight of 1,000 to 5,000.

62. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase comprises a microtiter plate or a test tube.

63. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the solid phase comprises a microtiter plate or a test tube.

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